

# AN EAGLE EYE VIEW



## **U.S. AIR FORCE** **RELIEF EFFORTS FOR** **HURRICANES KATRINA AND RITA** **August – September 2005**

Current as of 14 Oct 05

**On Aug. 29, 2005, Hurricane Katrina struck the U.S. Gulf Coast at Category 4 strength. It produced extremely high winds, heavy rain, storm surges and flooding that devastated coastal communities from Louisiana to Alabama, killing more than 1,000 people.**

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**Less than one month later, on Sept. 24, 2005, Hurricane Rita struck the U.S. Gulf Coast at Category 3 strength.**

**The storms swept through, indiscriminately destroying the lives and livelihoods of thousands of people.**



**Nature's path of destruction ...**



**Thousands of lives forever changed ...**





**... and America's Air Force answered the call for emergency assistance during the crisis.**

**These are the pictures that tell the story of  
the U.S. Air Force's support during  
Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.**



# HURRICANE KATRINA

- August 29, 2005
- Category 4 Hurricane
- Damaged Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama coasts



**As Hurricane Katrina passed through the Gulf Coast region, the Air Force responded even before the full gravity of the effects were known, taking care of its own people, and assisting in rescue and recovery missions.**

***Did you know ...***



***One day after Katrina hit, the Air Force opened the runway at New Orleans International Airport and Keesler Air Force Base, providing air traffic control and managing the airfield at both locations.***

# Missions ...

*The Air Force  
flew 4,811  
missions during  
Hurricane  
Katrina.*





# Missions ...

*(Right) An Airman quickly readies a HH-60G Pave Hawk search and rescue helicopter between missions.*



*(Above) An air crew finishes loading a UH-1N Huey before takeoff to assist in the search for Hurricane Katrina survivors.*



# Evacuees ...

*The Air Force evacuated **51,568** civilians out of the hurricane stricken areas to temporary locations throughout the United States.*





# Evacuees ...

*(Right) Airmen help Hurricane Katrina evacuees from New Orleans. The evacuees were given a variety of aid including medical checkups, food, clothing and temporary shelter.*



*(Left) Airmen line up to help unload evacuees from New Orleans off of an Air Force C-130 Hercules.*

# Cargo ...

*The Air Force  
delivered **17,248**  
tons of cargo to the  
Gulf Coast  
including meals,  
water and medical  
supplies.*





# Cargo ...

*(Right) An Airman offloads support equipment for fire and rescue personnel from an Air Force Reserve Command C-5 Galaxy in New Orleans.*



*(Above) Airmen in Biloxi, Mississippi take inventory and organize medical supplies delivered to restock veterinarian and disaster medical assistance teams established along the Gulf Coast.*



*(Left) An Airman pulls tight on the cargo netting of a pallet of equipment to be airlifted to Louisiana.*



# Patients ...

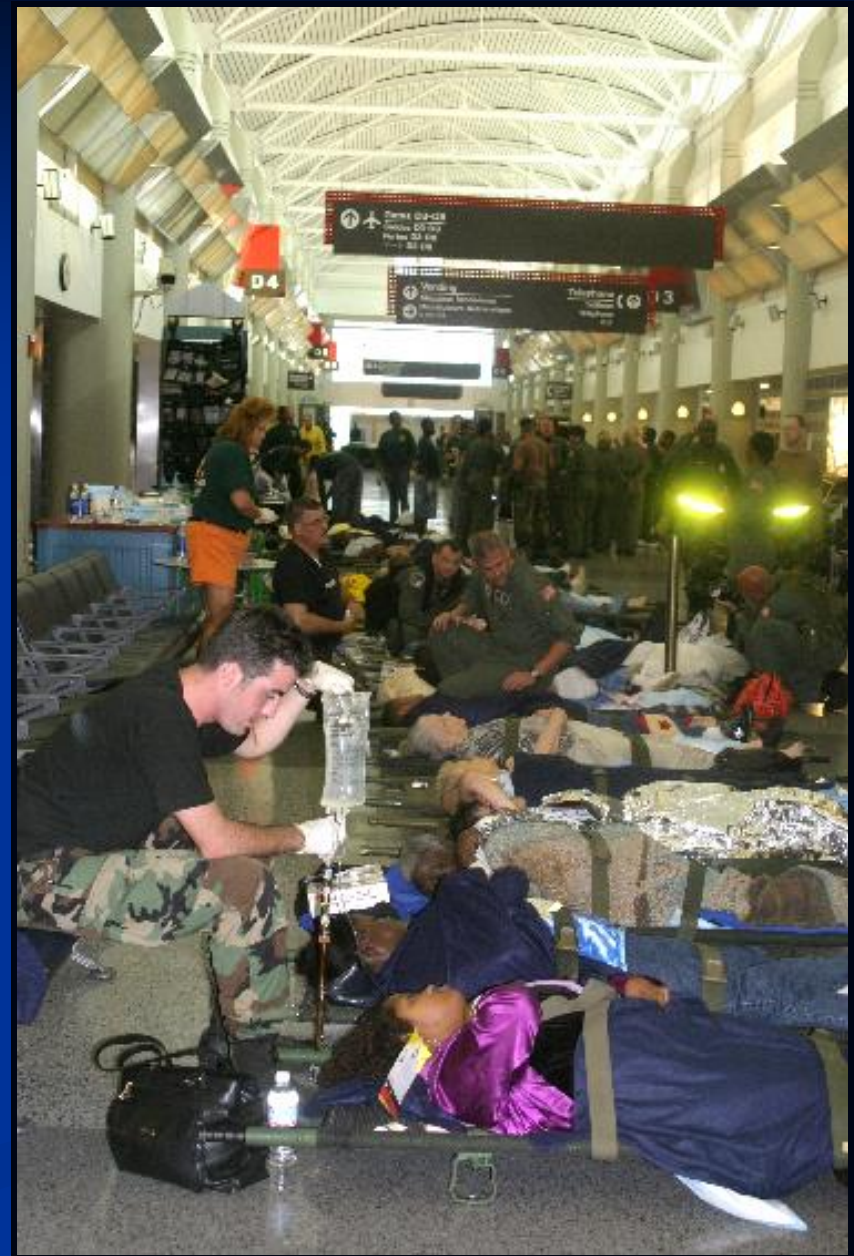
*The Air Force evacuated  
2,584 patients, making  
critical differences in the  
lives of those needing  
medical attention beyond  
the capabilities available.*





# Patients ...

***Air Force Reserve medics at New Orleans International Airport tended to patients awaiting airlift. Airlift and medical teams joined up to rapidly relocate sick and injured patients devastated after Hurricane Katrina.***





# Rescues ...



*Hoisted aloft from roof tops and carried aboard from broken bridge spans and other locations isolated by flooding waters, 6,964 people were saved by Air Force rescue teams.*





# Rescues ...

*(Right) An Air Force rescue specialist lifts a young boy to safety from the roof of the child's flooded home.*



*(Left) Displaced evacuees, rescued in New Orleans by Air Force helicopter crews, stare in shock at the devastation.*

# Pet rescues ...



*An Air Force Senior Master Sergeant carries a cat he rescued from the second floor of a flooded house in New Orleans. The cat is one of many pets saved during rescue missions.*



# Pet rescues ...



***(Above) An Airman examines a dog at the New Orleans airport. The dog was airlifted there with his owner before being evacuated to their final destination.***

***(Left) An Air Force Major feeds an orphaned kitten who was airlifted to the New Orleans airport.***

# Civil Air Patrol ...

**Members of the Civil Air Patrol, the official Air Force Auxiliary, conducted many Air Force assigned missions to support federal agencies, providing critical support to the Hurricane Katrina recovery efforts.**





# Civil Air Patrol ...



- Flew nearly 400 missions
- Conducted 102 ground missions
- Used new Hyper-Spectral Imaging system to survey damage, speed recovery

# Technology ...

**The Air Force used some of its most advanced air and space-based information gathering tools to locate survivors, pinpoint damage and help organize relief efforts.**

# Technology ...



***An unmanned aerial vehicle, mounted on a pole, used its remote operations video enhanced receiver, or ROVER, to help find survivors of Hurricane Katrina and support relief efforts in New Orleans.***



# Technology ...

***This is the first U-2 Dragon Lady aircraft tasked to collect imagery of Hurricane Katrina damage.***



***In support of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Air Force sent the U-2 out to collect needed imagery for disaster relief efforts. The film-based imagery equipment used is ideal for photographing very large areas with high resolution.***

**Air Force satellite images helped assess the extent of damage when Hurricane Katrina knocked out power and communications along the coasts of Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama.**



**BEFORE**



**AFTER**

# Air Force Total Force communicators sprang into action...

*Active duty and Air National Guard combat communications and air traffic control teams provided satellite dishes and generators. This equipment was critical to the success of search missions, relief flights, medical support, air ambulances and television broadcasts.*





# Helping communities recover ...

***Helping the communities recover was also a top priority for Air Force personnel.***

***(Right) Airmen help a mother sort out relief supplies and children's clothing at a Biloxi, Mississippi donation center.***



# Helping communities recover ...

*(Right) An Airman cuts through a downed tree while helping clear debris in New Orleans.*



*(Above) An Airman copies prescription information from a mother and daughter in need of refills as a result of Hurricane Katrina.*



# Helping communities recover ...

*(Right) Two Airmen prepare a tank truck in New Orleans to refuel generators and stranded vehicles.*



*(Left) A U.S. Air Force Reserve Command C-130 Hercules sprays pesticide to reduce the mosquito threat in New Orleans and local parishes.*



# Helping our own ...

***The Air Force also took care of our own people who suffered severe damage at Keesler Air Force Base located on the Mississippi Gulf Coast.***



***“The base and its leadership have been amazing. In addition to bringing our mission back on-line in less than three weeks, we provided critical support to local communities. At last count, we sent nearly 50 missions out the gates to deliver food, water and medical support.”***

***– Lt. Col. Randy Coats,  
333rd Training Squadron  
Commander***







**“Our goal is to save lives and help the people of Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama recover from this disaster.”**  
**—Acting Secretary of the Air Force Pete Geren**



# HURRICANE RITA

- September 24, 2005
- Category 3 Hurricane
- Damaged Texas, Louisiana coasts

# Preparation ...

**As Hurricane Rita approached the Gulf Coast, the Air Force preplaced troops and resources in critical locations to help federal, state and local officials respond swiftly and effectively.**

***Air Force Reserve Hurricane Hunters land their WC-130J Hercules after a flight into Hurricane Rita. The Airmen gathered information on the storm including barometric pressure, temperature, humidity, wind speed and direction and sent it directly to the National Hurricane Center.***



***The Hurricane Hunters are the only Department of Defense organization flying into tropical storms and hurricanes, and have done so since 1944.***



# Preparation ...



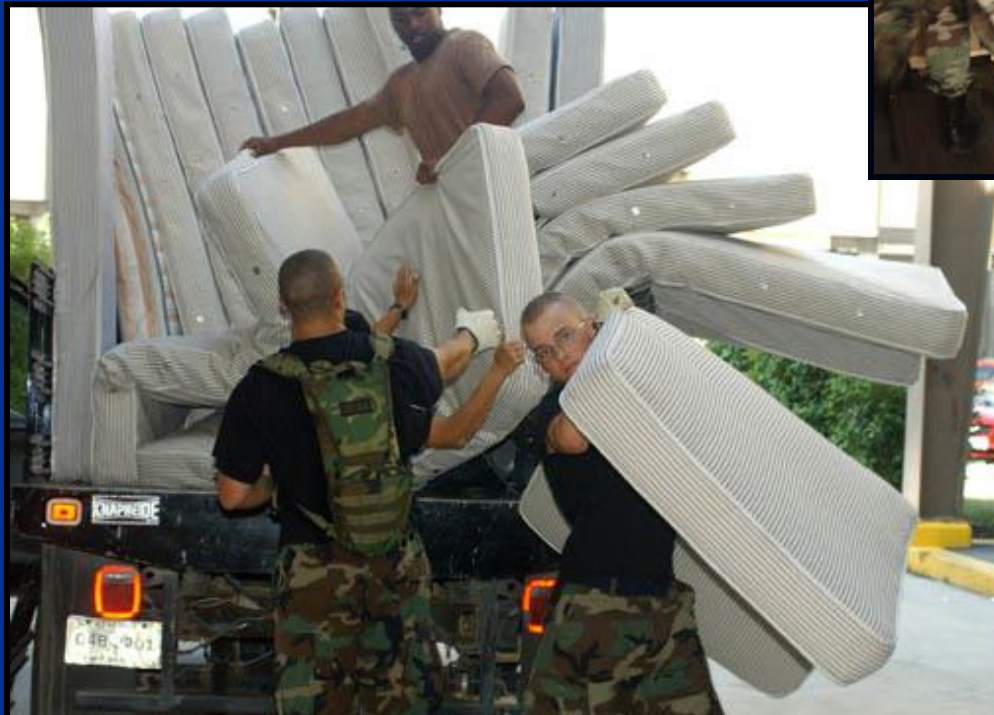
*(Above) Airmen assemble a cot at an American Red Cross shelter in Texas while helping to prepare three shelters for more than 450 evacuees seeking refuge from Hurricane Rita.*



*(Right) With Hurricane Rita on the way, Airmen fill sandbags to protect buildings from flooding.*

# Preparation ...

*(Right) Airmen move pallets of prepackaged meals designated for Hurricane Rita evacuees.*



*(Left) Airmen unload mattresses in preparation to bed down Hurricane Rita evacuees from the Gulf Coast. They stayed in empty Air Force dormitories in San Antonio.*



# Execution ...

***The Air Force flew more than 154 missions supporting Hurricane Rita evacuation, relief and recovery operations.***



***(Left) An Air Force rescue specialist helps his fellow team member check his rescue equipment on the way to a search area over southern Louisiana.***



# Execution ...



*(Above) An Air Force Major helps a Hurricane Rita evacuee onto a C-130 Hercules.*

*(Below) Texas hospital patients transported by an Air Force C-5 Galaxy are transferred to one of the many medical facilities set up to care for evacuees.*



# In Summary ...

Hurricanes Katrina and Rita struck a devastating blow to the U.S. Gulf Coast.

The skill and expertise of America's Air Force was essential in the rescue and aid of the hurricane victims.

In the words of the Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force, Gerald R. Murray...



***“More than a decade of continuous deployments have given our Airmen extensive experience operating in austere conditions. Couple that with their deep compassion and intense desire to help their fellow Americans, and they stand ready to render aid wherever needed.”***

**- Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force Gerald R. Murray**



**United States Air Force**  
**Total Force Hurricane Relief Efforts**

**HURRICANES KATRINA/RITA**  
**U.S. GULF COAST**

**PREPARED BY THE NATIONAL CIVIC OUTREACH OFFICE**  
**AIR FORCE PUBLIC AFFAIRS, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS**

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